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DESEGREGATION IN SOUTHERN HIGHER EDUCATION.

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BOTH THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF DESEGREGATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH IS IMPROVING, ALTHOUGH THE EXTENT OF IMPROVEMENT VARIES ACCORDING TO REGION. AT PRESENT, ABOUT 72 PERCENT OF WHITE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE SOUTH HAVE BEEN DESEGREGATED AND ARE NOW ATTENDED BY A TOTAL OF 10,000 NEGRO STUDENTS. FEWER CHURCH AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS HAVE BEEN DESEGREGATED. THE TOTAL ENROLLMENT RATE IN INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS VARIES, WITH UP TO 400 NEGROES ATTENDING CERTAIN BORDER STATE PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES AND AS FEW AS FIVE NEGRO STUDENTS ENROLLED IN SOME DEEP SOUTH "WHITE" SCHOOLS. DISCRIMINATION, HOWEVER, IS NOT CONSIDERED THE MAJOR CAUSE OF LOW NEGRO ENROLLMENT IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS. NEGRO STUDENTS ARE RELUCTANT TO ENROLL BECAUSE THEY FEEL UNPREPARED FOR THE ACADEMIC COMPETITION AND INTERRACIAL INTERACTION. HOWEVER THOSE WHO HAVE INTEGRATED GENERALLY TEND TO PARTICIPATE FREELY IN SCHOOL OFFERINGS AND HAVE EQUAL ACCESS TO CLASSROOM FACILITIES. THE DESEGREGATION OF A WHITE INSTITUTION TENDS TO AID DESEGREGATION IN THE COMMUNITY. ATTENTION SHOULD BE PAID TO THE PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY AMONG STUDENTS AND THE INTEGRATION OF FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF, AND TO IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN NEGRO COLLEGES. THIS ARTICLE IS PUBLISHED IN "HIGHER EDUCATION," VOLUME 20, NUMBER 9, JUNE 1964. (LB)

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Desegregation in Southern Higher Education

By GUY B. JOHNSON*

IN THE SOUTH higher education, like public school education, developed along racially segregated lines. Segregation not only was sanctioned by social custom, but after the close of the Reconstruction period was made compulsory by law in the 17 Southern and Border States and in the District of Columbia. In this region there eventually sprang up about 600 white and about 100 Negro institutions of higher education. The story of the transition from complete segregation to a high degree of desegregation in these institutions is a dramatic example of peaceful and rapid change in the structure of race relations.

The story begins in 1935, when a Negro student obtained a State court order for his admission to the University of Maryland Law School on the principle that the failure of the State to provide the same training for Negro students that it provided for white students deprived him of "equal protection of the laws." In 1938 the case of Lloyd Gaines against the University of Missouri led to a Supreme Court decision based on this same principle. After World War II this legal advantage was pursued by Negro plaintiffs. It was relatively easy to prove in court that certain professional and graduate courses which were offered to white students were either not offered or were grossly inferior in the Negro institutions. Thus in 1948 there began a series of Supreme Court decisions which opened one Southern and Border State-supported institution after another to Negroes; prior to 1948 only the University of Maryland, West Virginia University, and three or four church-supported white institutions had admitted Negroes. Between 1948 and the momentous Supreme Court decision of 1954 in the school segregation cases, the number had grown to about 25 public institutions and a like number of church and private institutions. The 1954 decision quickened the pace of desegregation and extended its applicability to the undergraduate level. Today some university and college desegregation has occurred in every Southern State. The major dimensions of this great social change will be sketched briefly.

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The Extent of Desegregation

Desegregated white institutions.—The simplest measure of desegregation is the proportion of all white institutions which have opened their doors to Negroes. Table 1, which summarizes the present situation, shows that 72 percent of the white public institutions have been desegregated and that fewer of the church and private institutions, acting completely voluntarily, have been desegregated.

Table 1.—Desegregated white institutions in the South, by type of control, 1964

Control	Total	Desegregated	
		Number	Percent
Public	251	182	72
Church	235	120	51
Private	114	48	42
Total	600	350	58

Since the South is not one solid region and since the pace of desegregation is to some extent a matter of geography, it is useful to break the South into the following subregions, ranging across the map from east to west: Border States: Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, Oklahoma; Middle States: Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, Texas; and Deep South: South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana. In table 2, which relates only to the publicly supported institutions, the

Table 2.—Desegregated white public institutions in the South, by subregions, 1964

Subregion	Total	Desegregated	
		Number	Percent
Border States	78	78	100
Middle States	96	76	79
Deep South	77	28	36
Total	251	182	72

geography of desegregation stands out clearly. The Border region accepted the idea of integration readily, the Middle region has been slower, and the Deep South has resisted vigorously until quite recently.

The time factor is also interesting, and this is indicated in table 3, where the progress of the three subregions toward desegregation is shown for 1954, 1961, and 1964. The Border States rather quickly reached complete desegregation, the Middle States are slower but are rapidly catching up, while the Deep South, in spite of doubling its percentage desegregated in the last 3 years, still has nearly two-thirds of the way to go. However, the trend is clear, and one may confidently predict that in the not too distant future no public colleges and universities in the South will be holding on to segregation. And it is worth remembering that the only serious incidents of disorder or violence in the desegregation of 350 southern colleges and universities are those which occurred at the University of Alabama and the University of Mississippi.

Desegregation in reverse.—For many years about half of the church and private Negro institutions have quietly accepted an occasional white student, but the tax-supported colleges have had to wait for the green light from State governments. At present the percentages of Negro public institutions desegregated are as follows: Border States, 100 percent, Middle States, 78 percent, Deep South, 11 percent, and Total South, 46 percent. Thus the Border and Middle States have the same pattern as they have for the white public institutions, but on a statistical basis the Deep South Negro colleges appear to be even more conservative than the Deep South white institutions.

Table 3.—Cumulative percentage of total white public institutions desegregated, by subregions, 1954, 1961, and 1964

Subregion	Percent desegregated		
	1954	1961	1964
[illegible]	20	100	100
[illegible]	8	64	79
[illegible]	3	17	36

While there is no great rush of white students to enroll in the average Negro college, there are some instances in which a combination of factors has brought about striking changes. For example, more than 100 white students are enrolled at Kentucky State College and more than 500 in Lincoln University of Missouri, and West Virginia State College now actually has a white majority—1,100 white to 900 Negro students. It seems likely that before many years have passed the label "white" or "Negro" on an institution will have lost most of its meaning.

Negro enrollment in "white" institutions.—What is the size of desegregation as measured by the number of Negroes now enrolled in formerly white institutions? It is becoming increasingly difficult to answer that question because administrators are reluctant to maintain any figures by race. However, on the basis of certain official figures and some good estimates, the situation can be summarized fairly accurately. Negro enrollment ranges from fewer than 5 students in some of the recently integrated universities, such as Alabama, Florida, and South Carolina, to more than 400 in some of the Border State universities. A few figures may be cited by way of illustration: University of Arkansas, 20; Louisiana State University, 60; University of North Carolina, 60; University of Kentucky, 125; University of Oklahoma, 225; University of Missouri, 300; University of Maryland, 450.

The number of Negroes now attending "white" public institutions is about 10,000. If the estimated number attending church and private institutions (from 4,000 to 5,000) is added, the total is roughly 15,000. If the Negro students attending Negro institutions which enroll white students are included, then the grand total of Negroes now

experiencing coracial higher education in the South would probably be more than 40,000.

The Quality of Desegregation

More important perhaps than the amount of desegregation is the matter of the extent to which the Negro student in the formerly all-white institutions is accorded equality as a campus citizen. Several aspects of this question will be discussed briefly.

Admission policies.—Official policy with respect to the admission of Negro students varies from hostility to complete fairness, depending upon the political climate and the location of the schools. It is easy to imagine that masses of Negroes are eager to move into the desegregated institutions and are being thwarted by unfair admission policies, but such is not the truth of the matter. Discrimination is a minor cause of the relatively low Negro enrollment in most desegregated institutions of higher education. Much more important causes, I believe, are the Negro student's awareness of inferior academic preparation, his fear of a new level of competition, his loyalty to racial institutions, his anxiety over greater expenses, and his reluctance to expose himself to possible snubs and embarrassments in the integrated college situation.

Accommodations and privileges.—In the early stages of desegregation by court order, administrators were extremely cautious. In some cases they attempted to segregate the Negro student in the library, the dining hall, the lavatory, and even the classroom, but a Supreme Court ruling in an Oklahoma case put a brake on the general adoption of these practices. The general trend now is toward making all campus facilities available without regard to race. In some schools that I know of dormitory rooms are now routinely assigned without any thought of the race of the inmates. However, I also know of exceptions. There are still some schools which do not offer nonsegregated housing, and there are some which withhold swimming pool privileges from Negro students. It is in the Deep South, where desegregation is still something of a novelty, that the most conservative practices prevail.

Campus participation.—In most of the desegregated schools Negroes participate rather freely in campus affairs. They have entered into many voluntary associations, have been elected to various offices, and have won membership in Phi Beta Kappa and other scholarship societies. In athletics their abilities are only beginning to be sought after, because there have been social and political pressures against scheduling "mixed" teams, but this situation is changing, and there will be some Negro "stars" on the southern teams in the near future.

It is only in the realm of intimate social contacts that there is a persistent tendency to draw the color line. In the routine social affairs of the class, the scholastic society, and the like, there is a good deal of participation as equals, but the intimate social world of dating and of fraternity and sorority membership is a very different matter. Here the problems are only beginning to be talked about.

Academic adjustment.—The Negro student's greatest anxiety seems to center on "making the grades". More often than not he has had an inferior preparation for college or graduate school, and he realizes that he must work very hard. Apparently he has been quite successful, since his average of flunking and dropping out is generally considered no worse than the white student's average. It might be asked whether his professors are being overly sympathetic in grading. It may be true that here and there an individual professor may have given him the benefit of the doubt in grading, but on the whole the professors are determined not to allow a double standard of grading to develop.

The off-campus community.—There is often a decided contrast between the relatively democratic campus and the hard facts of segregation in the off-campus community. It is interesting to note, however, that campus desegregation has been a factor in community desegregation. White students have often joined Negro students in trying to break down the color bar in restaurants, movies, bowling alleys, etc. Acceptance of Negro patronage by such places is now very common in the Border States and fairly common in the Middle States, but it is rare in the Deep South.

The Future

The transition from complete segregation to a rather high degree of desegregation in southern higher education in the past 15 years is almost a miracle in the annals of social change. The necessary regulative and structural changes will soon be completed, but there remains the task of arriving at the condition of equality of status and opportunity

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as standard for that State's institutions.[3] John Dale Russell [4] has found 50 percent room use and 50 percent student-station utilization average over the Nation.

Table 3.—Weekly cost of owning-using student-station(s) based upon depreciation in 50 years, by calendar plan and pattern of utilization

Calendar organization	Utilization base and cost *per week*			
	100 percent room use; 100 percent student-station utilization (Baseline)	80 percent room use; 67 percent student-station utilization (California)	67 percent room use; 67 percent student-station utilization (Wisconsin)	50 percent room use; 50 percent student-station utilization (Russell)
Section A. Student station				
Semester [1]	$0.28	$0.52	$0.63	$1.12
Quarter [2]	.23	.43	.51	.92
Trimester [3]	.22	.42	.50	.90
Section B. Classroom (42 student stations)				
Semester [1]	$11.80	$22.01	$26.29	$47.20
Quarter [2]	9.65	18.01	21.51	38.62
Trimester [3]	9.44	17.61	21.03	37.76

[1] 36 weeks per year.
[2] 44 weeks per year.
[3] 45 weeks per year.

From the preceding illustration and application of the three rates of classroom use and student-station utilization we can compute the cost of ownership-use per student-station-week under several plans for calendar years (section A of table 3). The purpose here is *not* to consider costs of financing, maintenance, operation, instruction, and the like, but to explore the cost of owning space with respect only to the frequency and extent of its use.) Section B of table 3 shows the cost per week for ownership and use of a classroom of *42* student stations.

The effects of calendar organization, classroom use, and student-station utilization on the ultimate cost of classroom space challenge governing bodies to study their institutional practices, seeking methods for obtaining maximum use of existing facilities. There is currently great interest in this subject as a part of the planning to meet the growing needs of higher education. Interest is not limited to the weekly schedule of classes but extends to revision of the calendar, which has been or is being accomplished by a number of institutions,[5] and to size of student stations. (The reader is reminded that assignable area for a student station in the foregoing calculations is a national average.) Of equal importance to college administrators is the task of planning optimum use of space in facilities yet to be constructed.

[3] Ingvar E. Schwehr (director). *A Survey of Physical Facilities of Wisconsin State College and University of Wisconsin, Fall 1960.* Joint Staff Study XXXIII, Part III. Madison, The Coordinating Committee for Higher Education, August 1960. 88 p.

[4] John Dale Russell. "Space Utilization," in *Proceedings of the Sixty-Second Annual Meeting, Central Association of College and University Business Officers* (Chicago, Illinois, May 4–6, 1958). Washington, The Association, Ralph Olmsted, Secretary, American College. p. 59–60.

[5] Vivian J. Kaplan. *Some Examples of Better Utilization of Resources in Colleges and Universities as Reported in Spring 1963* (Preliminary Draft). New York, The Fund for the Advancement of Education, March 1963. 14 p. (Mimeographed.)

Desegregation

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implied in the term "integration." Some of the major problems of the future are these:

1. Completing the job of desegregation itself and assuring the Negro student equal access to all aspects of campus life.
2. The integration of teaching and administrative staffs, a process which is in its early infancy in a few Border State institutions but which is bound to loom larger and larger each year.
3. Meeting the inevitable issue of "social equality," which may be expected to arouse considerable public discussion in the years ahead.
4. Giving greater attention to the quality of education in the Negro colleges and applying the same standards for accreditation as are applied to white institutions, since there is every indication that for a long time to come the majority of Negro students will get their higher education in predominantly Negro institutions.